

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 3, 2010

His Excellency  
Dr. Ilham Aliyev  
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Baku

Dear Mr. President:

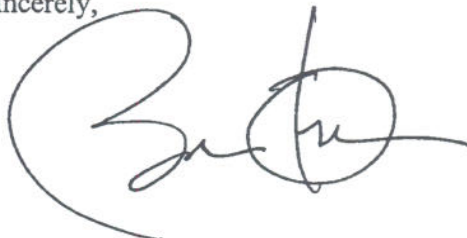
On the occasion of Secretary of Defense Gates' visit to Baku, I want to express my appreciation for the partnership between our two countries.

The United States recognizes Azerbaijan's important contributions to regional and international security. Our cooperation with your country began under your father's leadership after Azerbaijan became independent. It is my hope that we will be able to broaden and deepen our relationship in the months and years ahead.

Today, Azeri personnel serve with distinction in Afghanistan, and your decision to open Azerbaijan's roads, rails, and airspace to facilitate the resupply of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has further strengthened your country's stature as a steadfast security partner. Azerbaijan's leadership in the development of a Southern Corridor for energy has also increased regional prosperity and enhanced global energy security. Azerbaijan's continued commitment to the OSCE Minsk Group Process and the important dialogue you have established with President Sargsian make critical contributions to regional security. I also believe that a peaceful resolution to the Nagorno - Karabakh conflict is essential for the long-term stability of the South Caucasus region, and support for this outcome will remain a priority for the United States.

I am aware of the fact that there are serious issues in our relationship, but I am confident that we can address them. During this visit by Secretary Gates, and future high level visits, we will have the opportunity to advance our bilateral dialogue and explore opportunities to further our cooperation in the interest of regional security, democracy, and prosperity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Barack Obama", written in a cursive style.